

L. A. 1609. 4602 A 634

SCOURGE for the DISSENTERS:
OR, THE
FANATICK VIPERS.

WHEREIN

Some of the Dissenting Teachers,
who preach'd against *Popery* at *Salter's-Hall*,
are charged with the blackest Ingratitude, Fal-
sities, Pride, Ambition, Sedition, Inconsisten-
cies, Self-Contradictions, the Want of Cha-
rity, Schism, Malice, &c.

OCCASION'D

By their intemperate Zeal and Invectives against
the Tenets of the Church of *England*, from which
they receive more Indulgence than they could rea-
sonably expect or deserve.

*But they are all gone out of the Way, they are altogether
become Abominable—Their Throat is an open Sepulchre,
with their Tongues have they deceived, the Poison of Asps is
under their Lips. Psal. xiv. 4, 5.*

L O N D O N:

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TO ALL
True and Sincere Lovers
OF THE
CHURCH of *England*.

Brethren,

AS we are all Members
of the same Commu-
nion, to your Protec-
tion I commend this Treatise,
which had never been brought
forth, if the *Dissenting Mini-*
sters, who preached lately
their

The Dedication.

their Lecture Sermons at *Salter's-Hall*, had confined themselves to the Subject-Matter of what they undertook, and kept within the Bounds of *Decency* and *Good-Manners*. But on the contrary, they run into extravagant Invectives against OUR CHURCH, who has proved herself a tender Mother to them, and laid to her Charge Things of which she was never Guilty, and with unparallel'd Assurance arraigned and condemned her for Facts, which were literally false. But as Innocence will find Relief, and never want Succour, all they have done
in

The Dedication.

in this Case is to *heap Coals of Fire on their own Heads.*

There is not one Thing mentioned in the Title-page, but what you will find verified in the following Pages; and they were not content to exclaim against the Church, considered as a Spiritual Society, but to inveigh also against her, considered as a Civil Establishment: They complained of many Things, as *Grievances*, which their Forefathers have borne, and did not reckon them *Grievances*; they did bear them without *reviling* for above fifty Years; and the present Generation have *grown* up to
be

The Dedication.

be a *flourishing People*, not behind-hand with the rest of their Fellow-Subjects, except in the *single ARTICLE of Power* : And will no Consideration of *publick Conveniency* and *Safety* keep them *quiet* ? But you know they are of a *turbulent Spirit* ; and the true Ground of Complaint, is, not that we have an *Establishment*, but that *some Men* are not in the *Establishment*. The true Reason of our *disqualifying* Laws, is, that by entrusting those only with Power who are well-affected to the established Religion, they may keep the whole Weight of the *publick Encouragements* on the
Side

The Dedication.

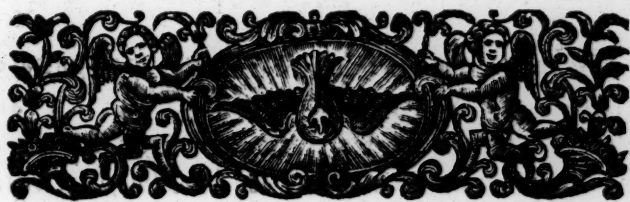
Side of that established Religion.

As we differ from them not in *Essentials*, but in *Ceremonials* only, it is their *Duty* to return to the *Church*, and stop the *Schism* they have made by withdrawing themselves from her ; when they do this, and they prove by their *Deportment* that their *Conversion* is sincere, then in all *Probability* they may not be denied a *Share* in the *Establishment* ; till then it behoves us to guard against our *Foes* : As they will not join with us in *Prayers*, in hearing the *Word of God*, and in the *Use of the Sacra-*

The Dedication.

Sacraments, but separate themselves from us ; what can we say, but that they are possessed with the Spirit of *Pride* and *Singularity*? In so doing, they do deny these Articles of Faith, the *Catholick Church*, and the *Communion of Saints* : They make a Departure from the Church, as if Christ was *quite banished* from hence, and that there could be no Hope of Salvation for those who abide here ; but if they cannot find Christ here, they can find him no where.

A SCOURGE



A

SCOURGE for the *Dissenters*:

O R, T H E

FANATICK VIPERS.



HE Wiles of *Satan*, to allure and entice the Souls of Men to Perdition, are not more numerous than the Stratagems and Artifices of *Popish Emissaries* to seduce and ensnare the Hearts and Minds of IGNORANT and UNWARY PROTESTANTS, to embrace the *Principles of the Church of Rome*.

B

Popery

Popery has of late been propagated among us with incredible Success; and *Popish Priests*, maugre all our Laws to the contrary, like *Wolves in Sheep's Clothing*, have broke down our Fences, and made Havock of our Flocks: What they dare not attempt openly, they effect by clandestine Means, and with Intrepidity, as if they were encouraged thereto by the Lenity of the Civil Magistrate, and the Remissness of such Pastors who ought to feed, as well as watch, the People committed to their Care, and thereby prevent, as much as in them lies, the young as well as the adult from being *Kidnapp'd*, and sent into *Popish Countries*, to the Detriment of the Kingdom in general, and to their own great Reproach in particular.

Perceiving this Evil to encrease daily, like a Contagion, and being apprehensive that it might become Epidemical, if a proper Remedy were not applied to the Infection to hinder it from spreading: Some considerate and well-meaning Dissenters address'd themselves to several of their Teachers, requesting that they would preach alternately *against Popery*, and by that Means frustrate the Intentions of *Popish Priests*, and put a Stop to their further Proceedings

[II]

Proceedings in seducing the Unwary. There was no Occasion for Importunity, the Persons to whom Application was made unanimously consented without Hesitation, and to each was allotted the Subject he was to treat upon: The Design was laudable, and truly Christian, and had the Gentlemen who undertook the Task, steered their Course *steadily*; had they stuck to their Text; had they not deviated from the Path in which they first trode, their Labours would have been as Praise-worthy as the Design of those honest Gentlemen who requested them to undertake the Business; their Names would have remained in everlasting Remembrance, and been as *sweet-smelling* as they are now become *fætid*.

Nothing more was required of them than to fortify the Minds of *weak* People, by shewing them the Absurdities, Innovations, Incongruities, damnable Positions, and Soul-destroying Doctrine of the *Church of Rome*; her idolatrous Worship, Superstition, ridiculous Fooleries, and the Cheats and Impositions of her Priests, who make the *Mammon of Unrighteousness their God*, and whose sole Aim, tho' couch'd under a specious Form, is to gull the Laity of their Money and Effects: This was their Province, these Things they might

have done without any Difficulty, having Reason and Scripture on their Side.

But to manifest to the World that they retain to this Day the old Leaven of *Forty-one*, and we know, by woeful Experience, that a little of it will *leaven* the whole Mass (for our Teeth have been set on Edge as if we had eaten *four Grapes* :) Some of them having *held-forth* a-while, tack'd about on a sudden, and as if it had been by mutual Compact (to me it seems a Combination, and it must needs seem so to every impartial Judge) they fell foul upon the *Church of ENGLAND*; that very CHURCH by whom they are nourished and supported. O Ingratitude! Ingratitude! Are these the Men with Consciences *truly scrupulous*? *Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in Ascalon.*

They are very *scrupulous*, I must needs own; they stumble at a Straw, but can leap over a Mill-stone: And such a Proceeding, such an ungrateful Return, when *our Church* was entirely out of the Question, calls to my Remembrance the Husbandman in the Fable, who seeing a *Viper* in the Road, almost frozen to Death by the Severity of the Weather, had Compassion on the crawling Insect, and taking him up, put him in his Bosom, and laid him

him next to his Skin : But what was the Consequence ? Truly a very fatal one ; for the Viper, being reviv'd by the Warmth of the Husbandman, and gathering Strength, stung the honest Man to Death, who had been so kind to save his Life. I will not draw a Moral from hence, all I shall say, is, That those *Fanatick Vipers*, whom the pious King *Charles* the First sheltered, and who participated of his benign Influence, deprived him of his Crown and his Life.

Had such Sermons been preached by the Ministers of the *Church of England* against Conventicles and Conventicklers in the Days of their *pious Usurper Oliver Cromwell*, their Doctrine would have been interpreted *Sedition*, themselves *seditious Persons*, and *Tyburn* must have been their Lot.

What is it that these unaccountable and audacious *Holders-forth* would be at ? Would they play the *Old Game* over again ? Are they so turbulent that nothing will satisfy them but down-right Republicanism, Anarchy, and Confusion ? Would they have more preaching Coblers, Tinkers, and broken Weavers to fill their Pulpits ? Will they not be content till they again prophane the Temples of the most HIGH
G O D ?

GOD? Till they have again turned our Churches into Stables?

The *Dissenters*, I acknowledge are very numerous, and I am very sorry for it; but yet we do not stand in Fear of their Numbers, or any Arguments they can produce from Scripture and Reason to support their Tenets, and refute ours. They have long covered and endeavoured to bring about a *Coalition*; but Thanks be to GOD, and to the good, sagacious, and penetrating Clergy who opposed it, they have not effected it, and I hope never will: For their present Behaviour manifests what their past would have been, and what their future will be, had they accomplished their Design in being placed upon a Level with us. They would be Tyrants, their Yoke heavier, and more galling, more intollerable than *Egyptian Slavery*; they, of their own Communion, who now keep them under, must have been made their Slaves had they succeeded.

If Experience did not convince me that the *Dissenting Teachers* are aspiring and ambitious, yet the Truth of it may be proved from their imperious and domineering Behaviour during the Usurpation of that Arch-Traitor *Cromwell*, in which Time they display'd their Pride and Haughtiness
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in *Lording* it over their BETTERS: And that they would do the same at this Day, had they Power, I am persuaded from the Character of them, given to me from one of their own Tribe: He was my intimate Acquaintance, and tho' a *Dissenter*, yet as honest a Man as ever liv'd: In discoursing with him one Day, the *Church of England*, among other Things, was brought upon the Carpet; and I must confess that I was very much surpris'd when I heard him declare with Zeal and Fervor, That he heartily wish'd the *Church* might be always *Upper-most*. Hereupon I began to question his Sincerity; to which he answered, What I have said, proceeded from a Heart void of Hypocrisy, Dissimulation, or mental Reservation; for, continued he, It is the *Church* that protects us, by Toleration we enjoy the free Exercise of our Religion, and we have as much Liberty as we can in Reason desire. Of these Blessings we should be deprived if *Popery* had the Upper-hand; and had our *Teachers* as much Authority as they would willingly have, every one of them would be a *Pope*; but now they are our Servants, and like Fire and Water must be kept under: If we approve not this Preacher's Doctrine, or his Morals, we leave him and go to another: This is a blessed Privilege which the Laity did

did not enjoy in the Year *Forty-Eight*, but I hope it is established for ever.

Here you have the Opinion of an *honest Dissenter*, and the Character he gives of the *dissenting Teachers*; and if he were now alive, I am morally sure he would not only decry the late Proceedings of the Preachers at *Salter's Hall*, for censuring the Doctrine of the *Church of England*, at a Time when in Reason it might be expected, that those Gentlemen should have confined the Subject-Matter of their Discourses to such Points as lie in common between *Protestants* of all Denominations, which afford a very large Field of Controversy: I say he would not only decry their Proceedings, but he would have told them plainly, That it could be no Service to the *Protestant Interest* to sow Discord among *Protestants* themselves, and taking away that Confidence, *That any Sect among us may have in the Safety of its own Communion.*

I acknowledge that there have been, and still are, Differences among us; but if these Differences, as is usually said, concern not the *Essentials of Salvation*, they would surely be much better adjusted in quiet Times, than be brought again upon the *Tapis* (after they had been so long dormant)

mant) in a Time of common Danger; or, if they cannot be adjusted, left to rest where they do, as a proper Matter for Charity and mutual Forbearance.

It was a settled Point among us, That the worst Protestant Communion is *still better* than *Popery*; but some of the *Dissenting Preachers* seem to be of Opinion, That it is no *Point* gain'd to make *Proselytes*, unless they can also make those *Proselytes from Popery* Converts to *themselves*, which is placing Things upon a very narrow Bottom, and no Good can be expected from such Attempts.

If it be considered that the *Church of England* is established by Law, then it will follow, that, in the Judgment of every unprejudiced and unbiassed Person, she had certainly a *more* than *common* Right to be treated with Decency and good Manners; for there is something so Sacred in Authority, that it ought always to secure it from Insolence and Disdain. But the *Church of England* seems to be the peculiar Mark of these Gentlemens Spleen, and in all their Exclamations against *Popery* there is such a *Mixture* of Inveective against the Establishment, that it is no easy Matter to say which of them, in their Opinion, they take to be the greater Tyranny of
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the two, or which is most remote from the Purity and Simplicity of the Gospel.

Let me not be understood to mean that they are ALL chargeable with these Faults ; SOME of them are, and WHO they are will be manifested in the Sequel of this Discourse. I shall enter upon the Consideration of their Lectures, with no Inclination to rob these Preachers of any Part of their due Applause, by under-valuing any Thing they have said in Defence of the Common Cause ; for my Intention is only to remark a few Particulars, which, in my humble Judgment, had better been spared, and which, in the Opinion of every disinterested Man, must have an ill Effect upon the Minds of many into whose Hands their printed Sermons may fall.

I shall make it evidently appear, from the Quotations out of some of these Gentlemens Lectures, that they have endeavoured to break that Harmony and Agreement which have so long subsisted between *Protestants* in general ; for they have intimated that ALL of the Communion of the *Church of England* are no better than *Disguised Papists* : And as *Discord* and *Disunion* must necessarily arise from thence, the Consequence thereof can be no other than *Sedition*.

Are

Are they then preparing the Way for the *Good Old Cause*? Are they making its Paths even? They may find a much rougher Piece of Work than their bloody Antecessors (the *Regicides*) did. Do they consider what the Effects of *Sedition* are? I will lay before them some of its Fruits. It engenders and nourishes Irreverence of God, Disobedience to Majestrates, Corruption of Manners, Change of Laws, and Contempt of Justice. It causes Revenge, Forgetfulness of Consanguinity, Parentage and Friendship, Violence, Robberies, Confiscations, savage Murders, infinite Excesses, and intollerable Miseries, pitiful to behold, and sorrowful to be rehearsed. Sedition lays Waste whole Countries, and sacks Towns; it armeth the Son against the Father, the Father against the Son, Brother against Brother, and Kinsman against Kinsman: It is the Seed of all Kind of Evils, even of those that are most execrable: It was the Opinion of *Pythagoras* that three Things were by all Means to be removed, *A Disease from the Body, Ignorance from the Soul, and Sedition from the City.*

Now, if these are the monstrous Effects of Sedition, as they certainly are, I would advise the CONSISTENT *Protestants*, to use Mr. C——r's own Words, to take them

them into their serious Consideration ; and also to take Care how they imbibe, and their Pastors how they inculcate, such Notions as tend to, and may in all Probability create such pernicious Mischiefs. But some People take Delight in troubled Waters, and care not what Lengths they go, or what Hazards they run for the Sake of Lucre ; or who sinks or who swims, if they can keep themselves above Water : But let such Men reflect that it is the Fate of some to be drowned, and of others to die the Death of a Dog ; and truly an Halter is justly the Due of a seditious Person, and God grant that they who merit it, may be rewarded with it. I wish that we may not at last find *a Snake in the Grass*.

Mr. C——r and his Brethren must needs remember what an Out-cry was made against Dr. *Sacheverell*, on Account of the Sermon which he preached at St. *Paul's* on the Fifth of *November* ; in my humble Opinion, *Mutatis Mutandis*, Mr. Cb——r deserves as severe a Reprehension as the Doctor did : I would not have any one imagine that I am an Advocate, who plead in the Behalf of that *Beanttefen*, or that I intend to vindicate his Sermon ; I am so far from it, that I look upon it to be a seditious Piece, and calculated, like
Mr.

Mr. Ch——r's (such are my Sentiments of both) to sow Division among us, which is the Fore-runner of Sedition, which must inevitably come to pass, if a proper Remedy be not applied in Season, and the Breach stopp'd before it be made too wide, and thereby rendered impracticable.

The Difference between them lies here; the Business of the Day required the Doctor to preach against *Popery*, and the detestable Machinations and bloody Purposes of *Popish Priests* and *Jesuits*. He kept to the Subject for a small Space of Time, then quitted it, and levelled all his Artillery against the *Dissenters*; they took the Alarm, and made a terrible Uproar.

The Task which Mr. Ch——r and the other Gentlemen took upon them, was likewise to shew from their Pulpits the dangerous State that *Papists* are in, and thereby caution those of their Communion from being ensnared by the Craft and Subtleties of *Popish Emissaries*, which would certainly terminate in the Destruction of their Souls: And had they confined themselves to the Subjects of their Texts, they would have discharged their Duty like good Men, but (as I said before) there is such a *Mixture* of Invektive against the *Establish'd Church*, that they seem to question which
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has the greater Tyranny, and which has the least Purity and Simplicity, THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND or *the Church of Rome*.

Upon the Whole, if Dr. *Sacheverell* merited what was inflicted upon him, as I am persuaded he did, what does Mr. *Ch——r* deserve? If the Head was chastised for nodding at the Feet, what Punishment do the *Feet* merit which shall dare to raise themselves against the *Head*? I do not only arraign but condemn both, since both have been equally culpable; but I would not have any one think that I call for the *Secular Arm*, far be such Thoughts from me, I hope the Transgressors will open their Eyes, and see their Errors, and then make an HONOURABLE CONFESSION of their Faults.

Mr. *Ch——r* is pleased to call *Church-Authority* the very ESSENCE of *Popery*, and very plainly intimates that the *Church of England* claims a BLIND *Submission*; but if he would lay his Hand on his Heart, and speak from his Conscience, he would then acknowledge that what he has asserted is FALSE.

If there were no *Authority*, then we should be involved in Confusion, there
would

would be no Regimen, no Rule of Government; and the *Church of England*, considered as a Spiritual Society, *hath* and *does* claim *Authority* over her Members in *certain Points*, but nevertheless in Subordination to *the Authority of CHRIST*: If she claimed a *BLIND Submission* or *Authority*, which she expressly disclaims, then she would not lay the Scriptures open to all, or encourage the Reading them, or tolerate those that differ from her, which it is manifest she *does*: Mr. Ch——r's Words are these; “ *Protestant Dissenters* “ are too jealous of their Liberties ever to “ be brought to sacrifice them to the *proud* “ *Claims* of *ambitious Priests*.——Go on, “ beloved in the Lord.——Know your “ Principles, and continue *Consistent Pro-* “ *testants*. Let the Spirit of *Popery*, *where-* “ *ever you discern it*, be your *Abhorrence*. “ Maintain the Liberty of your own Con- “ sciences, and allow to every one the “ Right of private Judgment. *Authority* “ and *Blind Submission*, are the Founda- “ tion and very *Essence* of *Popery*,——and “ *whosoever they are*, that plead for this “ Authority over the Consciences of others, “ and inculcate a *Blind Submission* to the “ Priest,——they are, *whatever Dignities* “ *they may wear*, Enemies to the *Pro-* “ *testant Religion* and *Liberties*, and avow “ the

“ the *most dangerous* and *most pernicious*
 “ *Principle* of all *Popery* *.”

He that is but little conversant with the Language of these Gentlemen, must know who those *disguised* Enemies to the *Protestant* Religion are, and who are here said to inculcate *Authority* and *Blind Submission* : They cannot be the *Dissenters*, to suppose that would be to suppose Mr. Ch——r accusing himself and the other Pastors of his own Communion ; nor can they be the *Papists*, for they do not wear any *Disguise* ; then it is clear he means the Clergy of the *Church of England*, whom he charges the *Consistent Protestants* to have in *Abhorrence*.

Does he not by this Doctrine advise them not to keep Company with, and to withdraw themselves from the Society of the Members of the *Church of England*, for surely no Men associate with Persons whom they abhor ? Is not this sowing *Discord* and *Disunion* among us, the Fruits of which I have related before ? If Mr. Ch——r hath not play'd the *Jesuit*, yet in my Judgment, he has acted the Part of a *Sophister* ; and I appeal to his Conscience whether he does not know that there is,
 and

* Sermon, p. 50.

and that he can make, and ought to have made, a Distinction between *Authority* and *blind Authority* : I may affirm that no Man will question his Ability, but as he has been wilfully guilty of such an Omission, it manifests his CONDUCT to have been *partial*, that he has not plaid the *fair* Part, and has causelessly, and yet not ignorantly, *slandered* the Ministers of the CHURCH OF ENGLAND, to his own indelible Shame and Reproach.

Again, Mr. Ch——r complains, That the *Church of England* derives her Orders from the corrupted *Church of Rome* :
 “ I know very well (says he) that there
 “ are among us (PROTESTANTS) Men
 “ who allow the *Church of Rome* to be
 “ a true, though a corrupted Church, and
 “ who derive their own Succession of
 “ Bishops from those of her Communion,
 “ and think that the *Validity* of their
 “ Sacraments and Orders depend upon
 “ their preserving that Succession en-
 “ tire.——I own, that these and such
 “ like Concessions may be very necessary
 “ to the SUPPORT of some certain
 “ Schemes, Pretences, and Claims : But
 “ I am very certain it is doing no Credit,
 “ nor bringing any Security to the *Pro-*
 “ *testant Cause*, especially as those who
 D “ make

“ make those Allowances to the *Church*
 “ of *Rome*, condemn all who dissent from
 “ themselves as guilty of SCHISM, and
 “ all their Sacraments and Administrations
 “ as NULL and VOID*.

Mr. N—l says, “ That it is *dangerous*
 “ to continue in a *Church*, the *Validity*
 “ of all whose Administrations depends
 “ upon an uninterrupted Succession from
 “ St. *Peter* ; and that it is unaccountable
 “ that any who call themselves *Pro-*
 “ *testants*, should be fond of deriving the
 “ *Validity* of their *Sacerdotal Functions*
 “ through this impure and corrupt Chan-
 “ nel — which seems for several Ages
 “ to have no other PARENT, than the
 “ *Mother of Harlots*, and *Abominations of*
 “ *the Earth*†.

If these Gentlemen do not know, I
 then must acquaint them, that there is a
 wide Difference between saying that the
 Priesthood cannot be *regularly* convey'd,
 but *through* the Succession, and that *all*
Administrations are *null* and *void*, which
 are not administered by those who *claim*
 from this Succession : 'Tis true, the *Church*
 of *England* *ALLOWS* none to administer
 in

* Sermon p. 43, 44.

† Page 34.

in Holy Things, but those who are *lawfully called*; but that she condemns all Administrations *otherwise* done, as *null* and *void*, is more than these Gentlemen have Authority to say, or are able to prove: But what they drive at, is because the *Church of Rome* is a corrupted Church, therefore she cannot convey the *Ministerial Authority*.

“ Can (says Mr. N—l) the *Sacerdotal Character* be convey’d thro’ such impure “ Canals?” And Mr. Ch——r answers directly to the Point, and says, “ The “ *Popish Bishops* are not *Christian Bi-* “ *shops*, and therefore their Ordinations “ are no more *valid* than if they proceed- “ ed from an *Indian Brachman*, or a *Ma-* “ *hometan Dervise* *”. But yet these Gen- tlemen say, they have *VALID* Orders in their *Communion*! For, “ If Men are “ qualified by *sufficient Knowledge*, by “ *strong Inclination*, by *undissembled Pie-* “ *ty* to preach the Gospel, they have one “ of the *best Commissions* from God that “ they can desire †”: This is what Mr. Ch——r says: And so Mr. N——l, — “ The *Protestant Religion* is in a much “ safer Way of Salvation, which admits “ Persons *duely qualified*, and *solemnly se-* “ *perated*

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* Page 36.

† *Second Treatise*, &c. p. 38.

“ *perated* to the Pastoral Office; to be
“ rightful Ministers of *Jesus Christ* *”.

These are very extraordinary Assertions, and the Gentleman would have done well to have given, if they were able, some Proof for them; they want more than a bare Allegation to confirm and support them: But perhaps they reserve this for for some future Opportunity.

I am persuaded they will acknowledge, that there is some *Virtue* or *spiritual Effect* in the Administration of the Gospel Ordinances; and if so, then I would ask them, whether the *Corruption* of *Faith*, or *Manners* in the *Administrator*, will PREVENT the Effect of these Ordinances on the Part of the *Receiver*? I take it for granted that they will answer in the *Negative*.

Then, if *Gospel Ordinance* MAY BE CONVEY'D through an *impure Channel*, why not the *Pastoral Authority*? Their Doctrine is, That every one who is *qualified* (*i.e.* who *thinks* himself qualified) and is *strongly inclined*, or (to use Mr. N—l's Phrase) who is *solemnly seperated* (though

(though no body knows by *whom*) without any Kind of Regard to Succession, may exercise the Office of a *Christian Minister*: But is not this a *flat Contradiction* to the *Practice* of the whole *Christian Church*, as taken from the Apostles, and to the Sentiments of great Numbers even among the *Dissenters* themselves.

These Points have been debated an hundred Times over, and if these Gentlemen have a Mind to renew the Controversy, our *English Clergy* are ready to enter the Lists with them.

Any reasonable Man would think that there was neither *Reason* or *Discretion* to revive these old Disputes at *this Time*, since the Cause does not lie between *Protestants* and *Protestants*, but between *Protestants* and the *Church* of ROME.

But supposing, though by no Means admitting, that the Church of *England* is wrong in the Method she insists upon; these Gentlemen might have allowed her the Benefit of their own *Rules*. If we have no Succession, nor ought to claim any, we have nevertheless *Qualifications*, *Inclinations*, *solemn Preparations*, as well as they, in Virtue of all which, it might be

be hoped at least, that they would allow us to have a *valid Ministry*, and to be a *safe Communion*; especially since Mr. Ch——r informs us, that “ a sincere Compliance with the Terms of the Gospel, will secure the Blessings of Redemption *.”

But that we should not flatter our selves upon such HOPES as these, we are told plainly, that it is DANGEROUS to continue in a Church, the Validity of whose Administration depends upon an uninterrupted Succession, That is (for it is the same Thing with them) it is dangerous to continue in a Church, which DERIVES its Succession through the corrupted Church of ROME.

Such a Church is no *Protestant Church*: For pray observe what Mr. N——e says, THE PROTESTANT Religion, which admits Persons solemnly seperated to the Pastoral Office is a much safer Way, &c. the Import of which (according to my Understanding) is, that they who will not admit this solemn Seperation in Opposition to the Succession (which the Church of England,

England does not) are not of the Protestant Religion.

Hence then it follows, according to those Gentlemen's Way of reasoning, that as we are not *Protestants*, we must be *Papists*. Behold the Modesty of the Men, or rather the *Falsity* of their confident Assertion! They say we are *disguised Papists*, and while we pretend to be *Protestants*, have the very *Spirit* and *Essence* of *Popery*.

Is then *Popery* a *safe Communion*? No; it is CUT OFF from CHRIST *; the SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN †, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth.

Does not this confirm what I mentioned before, that these Men will not *allow* or *accept* any Profelytes from *Popery*, unless they are Converts to *themselves*; they would drive all Men to *Popery* who are not willing to *link* with them, and go their Lengths: For who that has an honest Heart would not rather *profess* himself an open than a *disguised* Papist?

According

* *Ch*—r, Page 17. † *Idem* Pages 17, 35.

According to the Principles of these Men, there can be no *safe* Communion: even their own Communion will have nothing to recommend them besides their own Confidence: They will not surely pretend to *Infallibility* or *spotless Innocence*, and what is it that any Christian can have to trust to, if nothing that is *good* can be conveyed to them by *bad Hands*?

Another Objection brought against the Church of *England*, is, That she has *too much* CHARITY for Papists. I look upon this Charge to be *sarcastical*, yea, a most *malicious Sarcastm*; but perhaps the Gentleman may be serious, and therefore I will give him a serious Answer.

We never had the Confidence and Assurance to arrogate to ourselves such an *Excess of Charity*; such an Expression would be Presumption in the superlative Degree, and therefore as we never did appropriate to our selves what he attributes us, this is another Manifestation of their Falsities.

We bless GOD for the Portion of *Charity*, which he has given us, we are truly thankful

thankful to him for it, and if we have what is sufficient, we are content ; we do not boast a *Redundancy*, but are so far from it, that as St. *Paul* prefers *Charity* before *Faith* and *Hope*, we pray daily for an Increase of it. But that we may not be indebted to the Gentleman for his *Kindness* to the Members of the Church of *England*, if what he says, be true, *viz.* That we have *too much Charity*, 'tis demonstrably true that the *Dissenters* have *too little*.

To shew that there were no Grounds for such an Imputation, I will state the Case with as much Brevity and Perspicuity as I am capable.

The Members of the Church of *England* allow that Men may be saved within the Pale of the *Roman* Church, *according to the Terms of the Gospel Covenant*, or, as it is expressed a little after, in *and by* that Communion *.

It is wonderful to see how Men will change! The Time hath not elapsed my Memory when it was said, *That by the Terms of the Gospel* a Man might be
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saved

saved in any Communion, I could tell, to whom this Doctrine *was* offensive; Mr. Ch——r, no doubt, can tell us who were *not*; and let him tell us also, for I call upon him to do it, why this is not as orthodox Doctrine *now*, as it was fifteen or twenty Years ago.

But let us now come to a right Understanding between us; what every *reasonable* Man among us does say? Read his own Words: *How GOD will deal with those, who, in the Romish Church, are invincibly Ignorant of the Christian Faith——I will not pretend to determine: I am so far from absolutely excluding them from all Share of his tender Mercies——There may be a Possibility of their escaping eternal Condemnation* *.

Though he seems to speak this with Abundance of ill Nature and a Reluctance, yet he can not retract his Concession; however, he has said it, and I desire to know why we may not say it as well as he? Another *false* Charge brought against us is, that we say Papists may be saved *by* that Communion; but we say *not*, for it is one Thing to be saved *by*
a Com-

a Communion, and another to be saved by GOD'S Mercies *under* that Communion.

It would not have been improper before the Argument had been carried to such a Length, to have shewn what a Papists is ; a Papists, according to the *Rhemists*, is described to be one, *that cleaves and adheres to the Pope in Religion, and is obedient to him in all Things.*

Every one that is under the Jurisdiction of the Pope, is not to be accounted a Papist, in the Strictness of the Word ; for there are some even in *Italy, France, Spain, &c.* who holds the Grounds of Religion, who sighs and groans under the *Romish* Yoak, and desire to be freed from it, yea, would rejoyce to see it.

There are others, who for want of Knowledge, and the Means thereof, are entangled with some Points of Popery, but yet they hold the Foundation which is CHRIST JESUS, and look to be saved through his Merits, and not by their own, or any others.

Now my *Charity* teaches me that *at least* a Remnant of these will be saved, and my *Faith* also is such, that I believe a Remnant of the *Dissenters* may likewise meet with Salvation.

As to Papists, who cleave to the Pope, &c. who will not be reclaimed from their Errors, who refuse to hear the Word of GOD, to read the Scriptures, or any other good Book, and persevere thus to the End, yet though they are in a most dangerous State, yet I will not take upon me to judge *magisterially*, or *absolutely* to pronounce their Condemnation.

I judged this Distinction of Papists to be necessary, because there is one Gentleman, I mean Mr. *W—t*, who does not seem to be so favourable in this Matter, as Mr. *Ch—r*, or at least he is not so *intelligible*; he addresses his Congregation in these Words. *When you are speaking with Tenderness and Charity of the Multitude of poor Souls, that are under the Roman Yoke, and hoping that many of them may be saved, let that very Compassion excite your Detestation of Popery, that hath so sadly abused humble and honest Minds.*

By

By *Popery*, as it stands here in Opposition to the *Multitude of poor honest Souls*, that are under the *Roman Yoke*, he must mean, if there be any meaning in his Words, the Popish Clergy; these he represents as *willfully corrupt* and consequently in a damnable State: But with Submission, I think it does not belong to me or him to pronounce such a peremptory Sentence.

But what does he say to those *poor Souls*, whom he supposes to be humble and honest? He allows us to speak with *Tenderness* and *Charity* of them, and to hope they may be saved: Nevertheless he presently tells us, that it is Flattery to allow that there is any Salvation for them; if this be not an Inconsistency, I know not what is.

Read his own Words. *Do not*, says he, *flatter any of that Church, by allowing that Salvation is to be had, any further, than as they believe and obey the Scriptures* *.

If the Question was asked, Whether any *Papist* believes and obeys the Scriptures,

tures, he would answer, No: Therefore we must allow that there is no Salvation for any of them: What Room is there then to *hope* that some of them may be saved? Are we to *hope* and *not* to hope? Or to *say* we hope, and *unsay* it again: Is not this a Self-Contradiction? To speak tenderly of them behind their Backs, and *damn* them to their Faces, is a Piece of *Casuiſtry* which I do not understand, and leave him to explain it according to his Capacity.

Mr. Ch——r has ſaid one Thing, which I hope has proceeded from his over-flowing Zeal, or want of Conſideration, which I would not, nor do I believe any Man in his right Senſes, and upon Deliberation, would have ſaid, if the whole World might be gained thereby: “ As to
 “ thoſe who have been bred up in the
 “ *Proteſtant Religion*, and have the Li-
 “ berty of conſulting the ORACLES of
 “ TRUTH; for ſUCH to embrace the
 “ Errors and Idolatries of the Antichriſti-
 “ an *Church of Rome*, WHAT EXCUSE
 “ CAN be made for their Madneſs?——
 “ Do they not WILLINGLY exchange
 “ Truth for Error, and the Worſhip of
 “ GOD for an impure Superſtition?

This

This is a plain Demonstration, that, according to his Doctrine, *no Protestant can* turn *Papist*, but he must withstand the Light of his own Conscience, and consequently put himself beyond the Reach of God's Mercies. The Stress of the Argument is made to exist in this, that such an one hath *the Liberty of consulting the Scriptures*; nor was this an angry Thought, for when he expresses his *Hopes* that *some* within the Pale of the *Church of Rome* may be saved, it is grounded upon this Supposition, that they are *DESTITUTE* of the *WORD of Salvation to enlighten them* *.

The Result of this is, that no *Papist*, who has the Opportunity of Reading the Scriptures, *can* be saved: If I could be brought to such a Belief, I should esteem it one of the wickedest Things that could be perpetrated by Man, to put a *Bible* into the Hands of a *Papist*; and I call upon Mr. *Ch——r* to shew a justifiable Reason why *he* should do it: For, if he should *not* convert him (and I am sure he cannot promise he shall be *able* to effect it) he puts the *Papist* into a *damnable*

ble State, but if he left him alone he is within the Reach of God's Mercies.

Let Mr. Ch——r consider how many poor Souls he has decreed to Condemnation. All *Papists* in all Countries who may have the *Misfortune* to have the Use of the *Bible*. This is Mr. Ch——r's Charity! but I thank God it is not mine; and if it be the Charity of *all Dissenters*, it is not the Charity of the Members of the Church of *England*.

Having considered some Parts of these Gentlemens SERMONS relating to the *Church*, under the Denomination of a *Spiritual Society*, I shall take Notice of two or three Passages in their Lectures as concerning the Church of *England*, considered as a Civil *Establishment*.

“ As a Minister of the *Gospel* (says Mr. Ch——r) I will venture to affirm that
 “ NO TIME CAN be improper to rescue
 “ the Ordinances of CHRIST from an
 “ ABANDON'D PROSTITUTION; and
 “ as a Lover of Liberty, I beg Leave to
 “ say, that EVERY TIME is IMPROPER
 “ to lay HARDSHIPS upon faithful
 “ Subjects, or *continue* them when laid”,
&c. Vid. p. 55, 56.

Mr.

Mr. N—l says, “ Far be it from *Pro-*
 “ *testant Dissenters* to plead, — even
 “ for *Negative Discouragements* for Reli-
 “ gious Principles, not subversive of Socie-
 “ ty and Civil Government*. May the
 “ Wisdom of the *Legislature* be directed
 “ to such Measures *consistent* with the
 “ Laws of *Christianity*, and the *natural*
 “ *Rights* of Mankind, as may strengthen
 “ the *Protestant Interest*†”.

Dr. Gros—r says, “ When a Man is
 “ hurt in *any* of his Civil Rights, with-
 “ out any CIVIL Forfeiture or Crime,
 “ merely on the Account of the Faith he
 “ believes, or the Worship he practices —
 “ this is *Persecution***”.

These Passages are so very clear, that
 they need not any Explanation; they are
 the common Topicks of Exclamations
 among the *Dissenters*, who are grown *un-*
easy under our Laws which *disqualify*
 them; who *demand* a *Repeal* of them as
 their *natural Right*, and censure the *im-*
posing and *Continuance* of them as *Popish*,
Tyrannical, and *Antichristian*.

F

I shall

I shall not argue the Point with these Gentlemen, for they have given sufficient Proof that they are not very *capable* of receiving *Answers*, but I should be glad that they would be so good to give one. What if the *Spirit* of the Nation *at present* will not bear such an Alteration in our Constitution? What if it has been *told*, That it is not his MAJESTY'S INTEREST *at this Time* to comply with their Demands? Can there be any Sort of *Decency* in their insisting upon it, even from the Pulpit, that *it* is a proper Time, and that no Time CAN be improper?

These Gentlemen are very apt to boast great Things of their Zeal for his Majesty's Government, and of THEIR Importance to secure the *Protestant Succession*: But true Zeal is not *petulant* or *untractable*.

One would be strongly tempted to believe that the Zeal these Men talk of, is not Zeal for Religion, or Zeal for his Majesty's Service, but Zeal for themselves; and that their many Complaints against the *Application of Power*, for the Support and Encouragement of Religion, do not proceed

ceed from any Dislike of *the Thing*, but of the *Hands* in which it is entrusted; and if this *appears* to be the Case, what Opinion must the World entertain of their Conduct? The intemperate Zeal, which they have shewn upon this Point, when their *Business* called them another Way, gives a strong Presumption of this.

Mr. Ch——r asks, “ Should not those
 “ who are firm Friends to the *Protestant*
 “ *Religion* use some of the *self same Me-*
 “ *thods* to prevent the Growth of *Popery*,
 “ which *Jesuits* and others use to propa-
 “ gate it?” He then tells us, That the
 “ Success of these Methods is owing to
 “ the *Poverty* and *Ignorance* of the lower
 “ and poorer Part of the Nation, to whom
 “ they *cunningly apply to by Liberality* on
 “ the one Hand, and Books of Instruction
 “ and Devotion (as they call them) on the
 “ other: Their *Necessities* are often *re-*
 “ *lieved* by the Charity of the *Popish No-*
 “ *bility and Gentry*; they have *Coals* pro-
 “ vided for them to support them under
 “ the Severity of the Winter, and Reme-
 “ dies freely given them to heal the Dis-
 “ eases, &c.

He then expostulates with his Congre-
 gation; “ What should hinder you from

“ being as *generous* as they? If the Poor
 “ are most in Danger, it is every good
 “ Man’s Duty to hinder them from being
 “ corrupted: God hath blessed many of
 “ you with plentiful Fortunes, and how
 “ can you better employ them than in
 “ SUPPORT of Liberty and true Reli-
 “ gion*, &c.

Mr. N——/ indeed calls this BRIBE-
 RY: “ I would not, says he, fill your
 “ Heads with imaginary Dangers, but this
 “ I am sure of, great Industry is used by
 “ Numbers of Priests——to undermine
 “ the *Protestant Religion*. *Bribes* are gi-
 “ ven, and large Promises of *Support* and
 “ *Encouragement* to the MEANER Peo-
 “ ple, &c†.

Let these Gentlemen dispute whether
 they *are* BRIBES, or not; yet supposing
 them to be *Bribes*, as Mr. N——/ asserts,
 it is not very evident that this Gentleman
 disapproves them, when they may be made
 to serve a better Purpose; for he adds,
 “ Shall Protestants be asleep, while the
 “ Enemy is cutting away the Ground from
 “ under their Feet?

This Inconsistency may perhaps be set
 right, by saying, that what-is *Bribery* when
 applied

* Pag. 53, 54.

† Pag. 38, 39.

applied to support *Popery*, becomes *Charity* when applied in Favour of the *Protestant Religion*. It is equal to me what they call it, *Bribery* or *Charity*; I am sure that is the Application of *Temporal Encouragements* to the Support of *Religion*; and if (as Mr. Ch——r alledges) it is the *Duty of Gentlemen* to employ their *private Fortunes* to this Purpose, I hope he will be so just to his Congregation as to explain why it is not *lawful* at least for the Magistrate to make the same Application of the *publick Revenues*: And when he enters upon this, we shall expect him to shew *how* the laying in a Chaldron or two of Coals to a poor Man in Winter, or sending him Things *necessary* when he is Sick, will more powerfully contribute towards creating a virtuous Principle, than a Stipend given to a School-Master or a Parish-Minister.

No doubt but if Mr. Ch——r had the Disposal of the publick Revenues, he would be very liberal *in laying in Coals* to his Friends: What sort of *Fire* those *Coals* would kindle, it is not difficult to judge, but it concerns us to consider in particular what would become of the *Church of England* in such a Case.

I have

I have carelessly omitted one Thing, which I shall now insert, as being a material Point: Mr. *Ch——r* says, “ ’Tis one
 “ *Note* that the Church of *Rome* can be
 “ *no true Church*, because she hath no
 “ Charity —— and *damns* all who will
 “ not submit to her Usurpation. Oh!
 “ that the same fatal Spirit had never entered into the Churches of *Protestants*”.

But does he not see he has been doing the very Thing he condemns? Has he not, as I said before, decreed to Condemnation all *Papists* in general, who may have the Misfortune to have the use of the Bible? Is Mr. *Ch——r* ever the nearer making Converts from *Popery*, by telling them confidently they are damned? *Charity* is indeed a principal Characteristick of a Christian, and a distinguishing Mark of a Member of the *True Church*; but can we say that this Gentleman has *Charity*, who damns by Wholesale many Millions of humble and honest SOULS, as he calls them.

If any of the Gentlemen, on some of whose Passages in their Sermons I have animadverted, shall think themselves aggrieved, unjustly treated, or hardly used;
 if

if they imagine that I have drawn wrong Inferences from any of the Premisses, or have tortured or wrested their Meaning, or have said any Thing more to their Disadvantage than what their own Words naturally import ; let them vindicate themselves, if they are able, without Evasion or Prevarication, and I will endeavour to vindicate what I have asserted.

If I cannot do this, let them make me sensible of any Error I have committed, and no Man shall be more ready to acknowledge it, and ask Pardon by Way of Satisfaction ; till then they must allow me to be tenacious of my Opinion, and to say that I am in the Right. It is their own Fault if they pulled their Houses on their own Heads ; had they not meddled with the Establishment of the Church of *England*, and arraigned her Doctrine and Tenets, I should not have meddled with them, they have a *Rowland* for their *Oliver*, nor shall they ever meet with better Treatment from me, till they shew better Manners, and become better Christians, and better Subjects.

F I N I S.

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to be the possessor of my Opinion, and to
say that I am in the Right. It is their
own Fault if they pulled their Heads on
their own Neck; but they not meddling
with the Mind of the Church of
England, and amongst her Doctrine and
Tenets, I should not have meddled with
them; I have a Head and for their Ob-
ject, nor shall they ever meet with better
Treatment from me, till they show better
Manners, and become better Christians
and better Subjects.

W. I. S.

